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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY
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SUBJECT: TURKEY: "ERDOGAN II" GETS PARTY-LINE VOTE OF
CONFIDENCE

REF: A. ANKARA 2223

[1](#)B. ANKARA 2235 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)1. (U) On September 5, the Turkish parliament gave PM Erdogan and his single-party Justice and Development Party (AKP) government a vote of confidence. As was the case with the presidential election (ref A), the vote split cleanly along party lines, with 337 AKPers voting for their government and program, and all opposition parties voting against. There was one abstention. Parliament will now recess until October [1](#)1.

[1](#)2. (SBU) After four-plus months of political turmoil, both the Turkish government and President are newly installed and ready to do business. Some things remain the same, but much has changed -- and not only in the presidency. Erdogan remains Prime Minister, with two-thirds of his cabinet unchanged, but his AKP has a new, resounding mandate, and the responsibility that goes with it. The face of parliament has changed as well, with some 85 percent of the electorate now represented. In addition to AKP, three opposition party groups -- the Republican People's Party (CHP), the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) -- reflect much of the spectrum of Turkish society. Some 13 center-left Democratic Left Party (DSP) MPs and a handful of singleton independents round out parliament's composition. All opposition parties, through their party-line votes and statements, have handed full responsibility to govern to Erdogan's AKP.

[1](#)3. (SBU) By their very participation in the presidential election process, MHP, DSP and DTP have indicated, to differing degrees, that they respect the democratic processes and may be prepared to conduct themselves as a constructive opposition. For its part, the CHP has so far sulked in its corner; if the previous parliament is any measure, the CHP's approach to opposition -- as long as Deniz Baykal retains the party helm -- will be to say "no" at every turn.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Potential fault lines are many -- between staunch secularists and the government; between nationalists and Kurds; among parties vying for primacy as "the opposition"; on different issues, ranging from constitutional reform to EU-accession related reforms, from counter-terrorism to Iraq and beyond. Civil-military tensions remain as well. Once parliament reconvenes, we will start to get a better sense of just how constructive or fractious parliament will be, and on

what issues. While AKP has the votes to pass most legislation on its own, Erdogan's ability to build at least partial consensus -- a goal he articulated in AKP's government program -- will be one important hallmark of success.

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